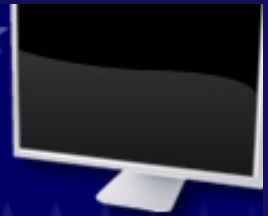




Media Fairness Initiative

A Look at Bias in the News



Voters Say Reporters Try to Help Candidates Win 6/10/08

Almost 7 in 10 voters nationwide believe that reporters try to help the candidate they want to win, while just 17 percent of voters believe that reporters try to offer unbiased coverage of presidential campaigns, according to a new survey by Rasmussen Reports.

The belief that reporters are advocates rather than objective observers is held by 82 percent of Republicans, 56 percent of Democrats, and 69 percent of independents. The survey found that this skepticism cuts across income, racial, gender, and age demographics. In addition, **76 percent of voters believe the media has too much power and influence over elections.**

Also, **54 percent of voters believe Sen. Barack Obama has received the best news coverage so far, compared to 22 percent for Sen. John McCain** and 14 percent for Sen. Hillary Clinton. Looking ahead to the general election campaign, **44 percent believe most reporters will try to help Obama while only 13 percent believe that most will try to help McCain.**

Americans Perceive Pro-Obama Coverage

More than four times as many Americans perceived a media bias in favor of Sen. Barack Obama compared to those who saw a bias in favor of Sen. Hillary Clinton during the Democratic primary campaign, according to a new poll by the Pew Research Center.

The poll found that 37 percent of all respondents believed Obama -- now the presumptive Democratic nominee -- got preferential treatment from the media. Among respondents who identified themselves as Democrats, the breakdown was 35-10 in favor of Obama; among Republicans it was 45-10 and among Independents it was 40-4.

Many See Press Bias in Favor of Obama				
<i>In covering the Democratic primaries, press has shown...</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Bias in favor of Obama	37	45	35	40
Bias in favor of Clinton	8	10	10	4
No bias	40	32	43	41
Other/Depends	7	5	6	8
Don't know	8	8	6	7
	100	100	100	100

The poll summary also noted that Obama consistently has been more visible in the news than Clinton or Sen. John McCain: **"In 12 of 13 consecutive weeks, Obama has been the presidential candidate Americans have been hearing the most about in the news. Last week 54 percent named as Obama as the candidate they had heard most about in the last week; 27 percent named Clinton and 5 percent named McCain."**

Associated Press Favors Democrats

The Associated Press has faced criticism for its coverage of the presidential campaign, with one recent AP article describing Sen. Barack Obama as **"something special"** with an **"incandescent smile and silky oratory."**

An analysis of 23 AP articles about the campaign found that 12 leaned strongly or somewhat toward Democratic candidates, four leaned strongly or somewhat toward the GOP, and seven were neutral.

The AP has enormous influence on national and local media, serving 1,700 U.S. newspapers and 5,000 radio and television outlets.